

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments in claims 1, 5, and 8-10 define the invention with enhanced specificity to overcome the Section 112, second paragraph, rejections. Amendments in claims 1 and 8-10 are also intended to more clearly distinguish over the art of record.

Subject matter previously appearing in claims 2 and 3 now appears in each independent claim 1, 8, 9 and 10. Claims 2 and 3 are cancelled.

New claim 35 is added to specify that the collected data that is selected to be converted into attached data is of a confidential nature. No new subject matter is introduced. This feature is described, e.g., from page 37, line 20 to page 38, line 4 of the present specification.

The present invention relates to an information communication device, method and recording medium useful in the management of a "target device," e.g. a photocopier, by a remote managing device, e.g. a server 16 at a head office (in Fig. 4).

Information regarding the target device is collected at the target device. A transmission processing section converts the collected information about the device into either mail data (in email format) or attached data. An information selecting section determines whether the collected information is converted to mail data or attached data. The collected and selected information is then transmitted from the device or devices to the manager. As will be discussed in more detail below, the principal prior art reference neither teaches or suggests any such selecting, and the flow of any attachment is in the opposite direction.

Turning first to the Section 112 rejections, the phrase "should be" has been changed in claims 1, and 8-10 to "is to be" to be more definite. The phrase "when device information should be sent to the managing device" in claims 1, 9, and 10 has been deleted. This basis for rejection is therefore moot. Every time data is collected, it is subject to this selection.

The Section 112 rejection of claim 3 is moot, as this claim is cancelled.

In claim 4, the Examiner objects to the wording "indicative of a state of use." "State of use" is used and described extensively in the specification, e.g. on page 34 and in Table 1. Information about such a state of use is simply that, e.g. a total copy count. Applicants urge that this wording is quite clear, and respectfully traverse this rejection of claim 4.

With respect to claims 5 and 9, the Examiner objects to the word "about" in the phrase "transmit device information about a plurality of management devices." The Examiner suggests that "about" could have a meaning relating to a specific one device or its physical proximity. While Applicants believe there is no ambiguity here, they have replaced "about" with "regarding" in claims 5 and 9, as well as its use in other claims, to avoid this rejection.

Claims 5 and 33 are rejected as indefinite because of the use of the words "predetermined" and "dedicated."

The predetermination in claim 5 is not limited to a predetermining of an area by the target device, the system, a user, or through the establishment of a boundary by the system before use. The specified predetermination can be made, as suggested by the Examiner, by any of them, or other means. The point here is to provide a managing device with information about certain target devices. In one embodiment, these devices can be ones located in a predetermined area, and this area can be specified by the user, the devices themselves, or otherwise. Applicants urge that the meaning here is clear, and respectfully request that the rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Applicants also respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 33 because it uses the word "dedicated" to describe a program. Applicants use the term in its normal, well-accepted sense as describing a program that is devoted to use in a particular system. In the present invention, it produces attached data in this system, not some generic program for providing all kinds of attached data, and not attached data produced by a program for some other system. There is no support in the specification or common

usage to suggest that “dedicated” in the context of the present specification, and as used in claim 33, means that the program is authored in honor of someone, or only works on a certain aspect of a device. Applicants’ use of “dedicated” is also consistent with its use in related fields, e.g., “dedicated server” or “dedicated connection.” Applicants respectfully request a reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection of claim 33.

Applicants also respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 34 under Section 112, second paragraph, on the ground that the word “higher” is indefinite with respect to a compression rate. Claim 34 is clear that “higher” refers to the compression of the attached data, which is compared to the lower compression rate of mail data. Or as claim 34 itself states, “attached data is compressed at a higher compression rate **than that of said mail data.**” (Emphasis supplied.) Applicants respectfully request a reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection of claim 34.

Turning to the art rejections, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 1-10 and 33 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by Motoyama et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,631,247, as well as the rejection of claim 34 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Motoyama in view of Wong et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,654,746.

Motoyama teaches a network or networks (Fig. 11) that can include business machines, such as copiers or printers, that are managed via the Internet by a system administrator (e.g. 610, Fig. 12) or service center 502 (Fig. 11). Col. 14 relied on by the Examiner discusses an example where the devices being managed are two printers.

The Examiner cites the use of email attachments, particularly at Col. 17, lines 57-63, with reference to Fig. 19B. However, this discussion relates to the transmission of an executable file to the device. As detailed at the top of Col. 18, when “clicked” by a user and executed, the attached file “will cause certain testing, gather of information, controlling, or logging of information of the attached printer [the particular type of machine being managed in this exemplary description].” Fig. 22 and related discussion

at Col. 19 describes an automatically executing file of this type. Figs. 25-28 and the discussion beginning at Col. 20, line 6, also describes the use of email to transmit the information to, e.g., the service machine 254 (Fig. 5) or the Service Center 502 (Fig. 11).

The Examiner cites col. 14, lines 16-20, which describes a report sent to the user from the Resource Administration Station in Excel or HTML format.

It is first pointed out that such a report is sent to the user from the Resource Administration Station. In sharp contrast, the subject matter of claims 2 and 3, now incorporated into claims 1 and 8-10, concern the sending of information in the reverse direction, that is, from the information communication device to the managing device. This teaching of Motoyama is therefore opposite to that of the claimed invention.

Further, the teaching of Motoyama relied on does not teach that collected device information is separated into data to be converted into attached data, and data to be converted into mail data. No mention of any kind of separation of data is mentioned by Motoyama. Rather, it appears that Motoyama converts the entire report into Excel or HTML format. Moreover, there is no suggestion that only some of the collected device information is in Excel/HTML format, while other collecting device information is in mail format.

All of the pending claims require an information selecting section that selects which of the collected device information should be converted into mail data and which of the collected device information should be converted into attached data. Motoyama fails to teach or suggest this feature.

The Examiner's reliance on Motoyama Col. 17, lines 58-63, concerns the attaching of executable files to an email. Again, this does not in any way suggest that some of the collected device information is to be converted into attached data, while other collected device information is converted into mail data. Further, the attached executable file of Motoyama is not collected device information. Still further, the executable file is being transmitted to the user of a device, and is not being sent from the device to a managing device.

Motoyama does not teach or suggest the claimed selection of collected data for either mail data or attached data, or the transmission of such selected data from a target device to a managing device. For these and other reasons noted above, Applicants urge that the claims as amended define patentably over the art of record, and that this application is otherwise in condition for allowance.

A petition for a one-month extension of time, to and including March 25, 2006, a Saturday, together with an authorization to charge our Deposit Order Account for the associate extension fee accompany this Amendment.

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Respectfully submitted,

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